



What is claimed is:

1. (once amended) An expandable hoop support for a flexible tube comprising in combination:

- a. a preformed hoop composed of a coil of material having memory retaining properties; and
- b. cylindrical delivery means for constraining said coil into a linear configuration whereby when said delivery means and said coil are inserted into said flexible tube and said delivery means is then removed, said hoop will then reconfigure from a constrained linear configuration to an original preformed hoop configuration.

2.(once amended) The expandable hoop support of claim 1 wherein said delivery means is a rod arranged to fit within said coil

3.(once amended) The expandable hoop support of claim 1 wherein said delivery means is a delivery tube arranged to fit over said coil.

4.(once amended) The expandable hoop support of claim 8 wherein said hoop comprises a stent.

5.(once amended) A procedure for opening a coronary artery comprising in combination:

- a. providing a preformed hoop composed of a coil of material having memory retaining properties;
- b. providing a cylindrical delivery means for constraining said coil into a linear configuration;

- a¹
- c. inserting said hoop and said delivery means into an artery; and
 - d. removing said delivery means whereby said hoop remains in said artery to support said artery in an open position.
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6. The procedure of claim 5 wherein said delivery means is a rod arranged to fit within said coil.

a²

7. (once amended) The procedure of claim 5 wherein said delivery means is a delivery tube arranged to fit over said coil.

a³

8. (new claim) The expandable hoop support of claim 1 wherein said flexible tubing comprises a coronary artery.
